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THE

# LIBERAL SUPPORT

OF

# *Gospel Ministers,*

OPENED

AND

# INCULCATED.

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By ISAAC BACKUS,

PASTOR of a CHURCH in MIDDLEBOROUGH.

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*The Labourer is worthy of his Reward.*

1 TIM. v. 18.

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BOSTON:

Printed by SAMUEL HALL, at No. 53, in Cornhill.

MDCCXC.

1790

☞ *AT a time when public credit is ſunk very low, and our higheſt Rulers are loudly complained of, all men among us may juſtly be alarmed; for a Government divided againſt itſelf, is brought to deſolation; and every city or houſe divided againſt itſelf, ſhall not ſtand. And God ſays, Them that honor me, I will honor, and they who deſpiſe me, ſhall be lightly eſteemed. And as the goſpel miniſtry, and its free ſupport, are the chief means of glorifying God in the world, it is hoped that the following attempt to promote the ſame, will be candidly received.*

Middleborough, Aug. 21, 1790.

# THE LIBERAL SUPPORT OF *GOSPEL MINISTERS*, OPENED AND INCULCATED.

1 Cor. ix. 14.

*Even ſo hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Goſpel, ſhould live of the Goſpel.*

THIS is as plain an ordinance of God as any he ever inſtituted; and it is as diſtinct from the ordinances of men, as heaven is from earth. The ordinances of men, enforced by the ſword, are to defend the perſons and property of all impartially, and to puniſh ſuch as work ill to their neighbours; but the ordinances of the goſpel are for begetting and promoting faith and love in the ſouls of men, ſo as to act towards God and their neighbours from heavenly motives. Therefore pure religion is an infinite bleſſing to mankind; and falſe pretences to it, produce infinite miſchiefs. This hath been experienced in all ages, and in all countries. Fear and love are the great principles of human actions; but they were divided by the fall, and the devil hath held men in bondage through fear of death. And nothing can unite theſe two principles, but faith in the death and merits of Chriſt, our great high prieſt and king in heaven. His kingdom is not of this world, and therefore the world have no right to uſe force about his miniſters. This will more fully appear, if we conſider what the goſpel is, who are the true preachers of it, and what is intended by living of the goſpel.

I.

I. What is the goſpel? It is a pure revelation from God, of ſalvation through his Son, by the power of the Holy Ghoſt. It is by the ſeed of the woman, who hath bruiſed the ſerpent's head. Truth and love form the character of Chriſt and his children; and deceit and cruelty form the character of the devil and his children; and God hath put *enmity* between them. Gen. iii. 15. This appeared in the old world between Cain and Abel; and between the ſeed of Cain and the ſeed of Seth. After the flood the church deſcended in the line of Shem, until Abraham was called out of Chaldea, and received the promiſe of the deſcent of the church in his ſeed, until Chriſt came, in whom all the families of the earth ſhould be bleſſed. And when he received the *bloody* ſign of circumciſion, it was a *ſeal* to him of the righteouſneſs of the faith which he before had in Chriſt, who was delivered for our offences, and was raiſed again for our juſtification. Rom. iv. 11—23. Gal. iii. 10—22. Circumciſion was a type of the death of Chriſt, and of a change of heart by his word and ſpirit. Therefore he ſaid of the remnant who are ſaved, The Lord thy God will circumciſe thine heart, and the heart of thy ſeed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy ſoul, that thou mayſt live.—The word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayſt do it. And an inſpired apoſtle ſays, That is the word of faith which we preach, that if thou ſhalt confeſs with thy mouth the Lord Jeſus, and ſhalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raiſed him from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteouſneſs, and with the mouth confeſſion is made unto ſalvation. Deut. xxx. 6—14. Rom. x. 6—10.

Abraham

Abraham had no right to circumcise any person that was not born in his house, until he had bought him as a servant with money; and he was an eminent type of the Son of God, who purchased the church with his own blood. Therefore the gospel says, Awake, awake, put on strength, O Zion, put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.—Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion: for thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for nought, and ye shall be redeemed without money. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth? Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Isaiah lii. 1—3, 7. Rom. x. 15—17. And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. Bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. 1 Tim. iii. 16. iv. 8. Every one that doth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God. John iii. 20, 21. The gospel is a pure revelation from God, which the angels saw more of when God was manifest in the flesh, than they ever did before; and the promises of grace belong only

only to thoſe who believe in and obey the Son of God. We come therefore to inquire,

II. Who are the true preachers of the goſpel? In the *firſt* place, they are all *taught of God*, without which no man can come to his Son. John vi. 44, 45. When he came as the light of the world, none received him but they who were *born, not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God*. John i. 9—14. No man can ſay that Jeſus Chriſt is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt. 1 Cor. xii. 3. If any man have not the *Spirit of Chriſt* he is none of his. Rom. viii. 9. Without it he is not a Chriſtian, but a blind leader of the blind. He who hath not a ſingle eye to God, to learn and do his will, is full of darkneſs. Matt. vi. 21—23. An evil bias blinds the eyes of the wiſe, and perverts the words of the righteous; and how much more the unrighteous, who were never born again? In the *ſecond* place, all true miniſters of Chriſt, receive ſpecial gifts from him, for the great work to which they are called. A good natural capacity for teaching, and human learning and accompliſhments; eſpecially a good acquaintance with language, and with the beſt methods of conveying our ideas to others, are of great importance in theſe affairs. Yet all theſe, without an honeſt heart, enable men to do the more miſchief, both in the world, and in the church of God. Therefore we read of the ſlight of men, and cunning craftineſs, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, in the ſame chapter which aſſures us, that our aſcended Lord gives gifts for paſtors and teachers, who *ſpeak the truth in love*. Eph. iv. 11—16. In the *third* place, the apoſtle Peter ſays, As every man hath received the gift, even ſo miniſter the ſame one to another, as good

ſtewards

ſtewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man ſpeak, let him ſpeak as the oracles of God; if any man miniſter, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jeſus Chriſt. The elders which are among you I exhort, who am alſo an elder, and a witneſs of the ſufferings of Chriſt, and alſo a partaker of the glory that ſhall be revealed; feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the overſight thereof, not by conſtraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being enſamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd ſhall appear, ye ſhall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewiſe ye younger, ſubmit yourſelves unto the elder: yea, all of you be ſubject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God reſiſteth the proud, and giveth grace unto the humble. 1 Peter iv. 10, 11. v. 1—5. Here we may ſee, that all true miniſters of Chriſt, are regenerate perſons, and have received ſpecial gifts from him for that work, with a command to be faithful ſtewards thereof, as they can anſwer it to him in the great day. They are leaders in the church, who are all to act as a united community, and to be ſubject one to another, as they would expect the *grace* of God to direct and aſſiſt them, and not to be *reſiſted* by him, as all the *proud* are. The name *Clergy*, which miniſters have arrogated to themſelves, came from the word which is here tranſlated *heritage*; and miniſters have acted as *lords* over God's heritage, by aſſuming the power of church government unto themſelves, as the prieſts had under the law, who could turn a king out of the temple. 2 Chron. xxvi. 18. And in this way the mother of harlots hath

hath reigned over the kings of the earth. Rev. xvii. 18. She hath assumed the power of disposing of crowns and countries at her pleasure, while she hath claimed a succession of church power from the apostles, which none but ministers could give or take away. America hath been divided, and filled with blood and slavery, from that hellish claim of power. But the Apostle Peter was so far from claiming any such power, that he allows none to be *priests* in the church of Christ, but those who are *born again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever.* And to this royal priesthood, and holy nation, he says, *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake.* 1 Peter i. 23. ii. 9—13. But when men invaded the prerogative of the Lord Jesus Christ, he and John said, *Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.* Acts iv. 19, 20. And John says, *Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil.* 1 John, iii. 9, 10. And when our Lord sent his gospel into the wide field of the world, he commanded his servants to let these two sorts of children grow together therein, until he should come to judgment, and cast the wicked into hell, and take his saints to heaven. Matt. xiii. 24—30, 37—43. While he requires his church to exclude all men who are fornicators, or covetous, or idolaters, or railers, or drunkards, or extortioners, from their communion. Purging out these evils, is the antitype of putting away all *leavened bread* out of their houses, in the time of the passover. 1 Cor. v. 7—13.

7—13. But by *confounding* church and world together, the holy government which Chriſt appointed in his church, hath been long trodden under foot. This will more plainly appear, if we conſider,

III. What is intended by living of the goſpel. As Jeſus Chriſt is the only HEAD of his church, all the ordinances and commandments of men therein, is *will-worſhip*. And his command to his church is, Whatſoever ye do, in word or deed, do all *in the name of the Lord Jeſus*, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Col. ii. 10, 19—23. iii. 17. Covetous men, who privily brought in damnable hereſies, were *ſelf-willed*, under the name of *liberty*. 2 Peter, ii. 1—3, 10, 19. They ſinned *wilfully* againſt the laws, blood and ſpirit of Chriſt. Heb. x. 26—29. And all ſuch uſe *force* to ſupport religious teachers, or elſe they refuſe to ſupport them any further than ſuits their inclinations. Men who love ſelf above God and their neighbours, heap to themſelves teachers, having itching ears; and they turn away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables. 2 Tim. iii. 1—5, iv. 1—4. But God ſaid unto Aaron, Thou and thy ſons with thee ſhall keep your prieſt's office for every thing of the altar, and within the vail, and ye ſhall ſerve: I have given your prieſt's office unto you as a ſervice of gift; and the ſtranger that cometh nigh, ſhall be put to death. And the Lord ſpake unto Aaron, Behold, I alſo have given thee the charge of mine heave-offerings, of all the hallowed things of the children of Iſrael; unto thee have I given them, by reaſon of the *anointing*, and to thy ſons by an ordinance forever. Numb. xviii. 7, 8. The ointment with which they were anointed, was of ſuch a ſacred compoſition, that

God ſaid, Whoſoever ſhall make like unto that, to ſmell thereto, ſhall even be cut off from his people. Exod. xxx. 38. But the holy Spirit, wherewith Chriſt and his ſaints are *anointed*, is infinitely more ſacred. It brings ſouls to know the *truth*, and that *no lie is of the truth*. All *deceit* is of the *ſpirit of antichriſt*. 1 John, ii. 20—27. And if it were not for that ſpirit, the laws of Chriſt would be plain, which ſay, Do ye not know that they which miniſter about holy things, live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar? Even ſo hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the goſpel ſhould live of the goſpel. Ye have been called unto liberty; only uſe not liberty for an occaſion to the fleſh, but by love ſerve one another. They that are Chriſt's, have crucified the fleſh, with the affections and luſts. Bear ye one another's burdens, and ſo fulfil the law of Chriſt. Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatſoever a man ſoweth, that ſhall he alſo reap. For he that ſoweth to his fleſh, ſhall of the fleſh reap corruption; but he that ſoweth to the Spirit, ſhall of the Spirit reap life everlaſting. Gal. v. 13, 24, vi. 2—8. Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, eſpecially they who labour in the word and doctrine; for the ſcripture ſaith, Thou ſhall not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn; and the labourer is worthy of his reward. 1 Tim. v. 17, 18.

As the goſpel is a pure revelation from God, living of the goſpel cannot mean a living by the laws of men, enforced by the ſword. Neither can it mean, that the bodies of miniſters ſhould live upon

upon ſpiritual food. To communicate unto them in all *good things*, cannot mean only *good words and fair ſpeeches*; neither can a *reward* for *labour*, mean *alms to the poor*. Yet the world is full of theſe abſurd imaginations. Teaching the fear of God by the precepts of men, hath made them deaf and blind to the voice and light of revelation. But the day is coming, when he ſays, The deaf ſhall hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind ſhall ſee out of obſcurity, and out of darkneſs; the meek alſo ſhall increaſe their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men ſhall rejoice in the holy One of Iſrael: for the terrible one is brought to nought, and the ſcorner is conſumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off; that make a man an offender for a word, and lay a ſnare for him that reproveth in the gate, an[illegible] aſide the juſt for a thing of nought. Iſ[illegible] 13—21. This prophecy was veri[illegible] came in the fleſh. Mat. xi. 6[illegible] will have a much more [illegible] when he ſhall reign [illegible] the glory of th[illegible] figu[illegible]

God was within the Jewiſh church, when he warned her leaders againſt looking elſewhere for his kingdom; but he is now at the right hand of the Father, making his people willing by the power of his goſpel; and he will ſtrike through kings in the day of his wrath, and wound the heads over many countries. Luke xvii. 21. Acts ii. 29—39. Pſalm cx. 1—6. Rev. xix. 11—21. But from the word *within*, many have imagined that they were to follow a rule *within* themſelves, above what is written. Scornful men of old ſaid, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing ſcourge ſhall paſs through, it ſhall not come unto us; for we have made lies our refuge, and under falſehood have we [illegible] ourſelves. Iſaiah xviii. 14—16. To be carnally minded is death, and deceit came from hell; [illegible] who think to ſecure themſelves by [illegible] are in covenant with death, and [illegible]. Iſrael followed after the [illegible] did not attain to it, be[illegible] but as it were by [illegible]bled at that

dation of the *apoſtles* and *prophets*, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner ſtone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom you alſo are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. Eph. ii. 18—22.

The *apoſtles* are ſet before the *prophets*, b
the firſt building of the Chriſtian church
in her triumph over Babylon. Rev. xvi
Hebrew church was conſtituted of
*Abraham*, and the Chriſtian chu
*of God*. And as it is *adultery*
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may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may ſerve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a *conſuming fire*. om. viii. 28—30. Heb. xii. 22—29. Hag. ii. . Is not my word like as a fire? ſaith the and like a hammer that breaketh the rock Therefore behold, I am againſt the h the Lord, that *ſteal my words*, eve- is neighbour. Jer. xxiii. 29, 30. eſt a man ſhould not *ſteal*, doſt ſayſt a man ſhould not com- commit *adultery*? thou thou commit *ſacrilege*? reaſures of the *firſt city* ere *conſecrated* unto before their ene- alley of Achor, *diſſimulation* vii. 11, entiles he

her unto me in the earth, and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy, and I will ſay to them who were not my people, Thou art my people; and they ſhall ſay, Thou art my God. Hoſea ii. 5, 14, 15, 23. And theſe prophecies are expreſsly applied to ſouls who were effectually *called*, from among Jews and Gentiles. Rom. ix. 24—26, x. 20, 21. To thoſe who were *born again*. 1 Peter, i. 23, ii. 9, 10. All *Chriſtians* have the *Spirit of truth, who will guide them into all truth*. John xvi. 13. And to diſtinguiſh the diſciples of Chriſt by any *name* which men have invented, is a *carnal* practice. 1 Cor. iii. 3. When the Jews were carried into Babylon, the command was, Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the iſles afar off, and ſay, He that ſcattereth Iſrael, will gather him, and keep him, as a ſhepherd doth his flock. In thoſe days they ſhall ſay no more, The fathers have eaten a ſour grape, and the children's teeth are ſet on edge. But every one ſhall die for his own iniquity, every man that eateth the ſour grape, his teeth ſhall be ſet on edge. Behold the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will make a *new covenant* with the houſe of Iſrael, and with the houſe of Judah; *not according to the covenant* that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt (which my covenant they break, although I was an *huſband* unto them, ſaith the Lord:) but this ſhall be the covenant that I will make with the houſe of Iſrael, After thoſe days, ſaith the Lord, I will put my law in their *inward parts*, and write it in their *hearts*, and I *will* be their God, and they *ſhall* be my people. And they ſhall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, ſaying, Know the Lord; for

for they ſhall *all know me*, from the leaſt of them unto the greateſt of them, ſaith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their ſin no more. Jer. xxxi. 10, 29—34. Upon which an inſpired apoſtle ſays, In that he ſaith, A new covenant, he hath made the firſt old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vaniſh away. He taketh away the firſt, that he may eſtabliſh the ſecond. Heb. viii. 8—13, x. 9. Circumciſion in the fleſh, was the firſt covenant with Abraham and his ſeed, and circumciſion in the heart is the ſecond. And when the martyr Stephen was accuſed of holding that Jeſus of Nazareth would deſtroy their temple at Jeruſalem, and change the cuſtoms which Moſes delivered unto Iſrael, he recited many facts concerning their nation, and then ſaid, The moſt High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as ſaith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footſtool: what houſe will ye build me? ſaith the Lord; or what is the place of my reſt? hath not my hand made all theſe things? Ye ſtiffnecked, and *uncircumciſed in heart and ears, ye do always reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt:* as your fathers did, ſo do ye. Acts vii. 8, 48—51. In the prophecy referred to, God ſays, *To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite ſpirit, and trembleth at my word.* And concerning Jews and Gentiles, he ſays, I will take of them for *prieſts*, and for *Levites*, ſaith the Lord. For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make, ſhall remain before me, ſaith the Lord, ſo ſhall your ſeed and your name remain. Iſaiah lxvi. 1, 2, 21, 22.

Now we are to remember, that the ſeed of Aaron, and all the tribe of Levi, were *hallowed* to God, in the room of all the *firſt-born* in Iſrael. None but

but the lawful ſeed of Aaron were prieſts, to make atonement for ſin; and that was not to be done for any *preſumptuous* man. Every man alſo who ſhould act *preſumptuouſly*, againſt the ſentence of their prieſt and judge, in the place of God's ſanctuary, was to die without mercy. Num. iii. 1—13. xv. 30. Deut. xvii. 8—12. The prieſt was to give ſentence in ſuch caſes, by the Urim and Thummim; but theſe were loſt in the Babylonian captivity; after which no prieſt was allowed to eat of the *moſt holy things*, who could not ſhew a *regiſter* of his lawful deſcent from Aaron, until a prieſt ſtood up with Urim and Thummim. Ezra ii. 61—63. The words ſignify *light and perfection*. The ark of the teſtimony, the mercy-ſeat, the cloud of glory thereon, with the fire from heaven upon the altar, were alſo loſt in the Babylonian captivity; but the *ſpirit* of them all was reſtored by Jeſus, *who through the eternal Spirit, offered himſelf without ſpot to God, to purge our conſciences from dead works to ſerve the living God. We have an altar whereof they have no right to eat, which ſerve the tabernacle. By him therefore let us offer the ſacrifice of praiſe to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. But to do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with ſuch ſacrifices God is well pleaſed.* Chriſt is of an *order* above Levi or Abraham, whoſe covenants he hath *diſannulled*. Heb. vii. 1—22. ix. 14. xiii. 10—16. And the great apoſtle of the Gentiles ſays, We are not ſufficient of ourſelves to think any thing as of ourſelves, but all our ſufficiency is of God; who alſo hath made us able miniſters of the *new teſtament*, not of the *letter*, but of the *ſpirit*; for the letter *killeth*, but the ſpirit *giveth life*. 2 Cor. iii. 5,6. So our Lord ſays, It is the *Spirit* that quickneth,

the *flesh* profiteth nothing: the *words* that I speak unto you, they are *spirit*, and they are *life*. John vi. 63. And they who are thus quickned, are the only church of the *first-born*, under the gospel. All the *first-fruits* in Israel, were also consecrated unto God. Exod. xxii. 29. Therefore another apostle says, Of his own will begat he us with the *word of truth*, that we should be a kind of *first-fruits* of his creatures. James i. 18. The sovereign will of God is the cause, the word of truth is the means, and an intire devotedness to God is the end of the gospel dispensation.

From Abraham unto the death of Christ, peculiar religious privileges were confined to certain families. Even the preaching of the gospel was limited to the *house of Israel*, which is now free for *all nations*. Matt. x. 6. xxviii. 19. Therefore none have any reason to say, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge; for all the privileges of the covenant of grace are personal, as they were not before the death of Christ. Lot was a righteous man, as well as Abraham; but the Israelites were not allowed to invade the possessions of the children of Lot, nor to receive them into the church of God. Deut. ii. 17—19. Num. xxiii. 9. The first son of Abraham was cast out of the church, for *mocking* at the joy of faith; and the unregenerate do the like to this day. Gen. xxi. 8—12. Gal. iv. 22—29. Esau *profanely* sold his birthright; and he found no place of *repentance* afterwards. And the *envy* of his posterity brought ruin upon their country, while *electing love* continued with a *remnant* of the seed of Jacob. Gen. xxv. 29—34. xxvii. 38. Heb. xii. 16, 17. Ezek. xxxv. 11. Mal. i. 2, 3. Rom. ix. 7—13. xi. 5. And in the church of Israel, Reuben

ben loſt his birthright, by defiling his father's bed; and ſome of his tribe periſhed in the gainſaying of Korah. Gen. xlix. 3, 4. Num. xvi. 1—3. The birthright was Joſeph's, who did wonders in Egypt, and Joſhua led Iſrael into Canaan; yet, becauſe Ephraim became the head of an idolatrous kingdom, they were *divorced*, and never returned from captivity as a nation, but only as individuals. And though Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; yet the *crown* was taken from the houſe of David, for their wickedneſs, and was not reſtored until Jeſus came to wear it. And for rejecting him, the Jews will be of the ſynagogue of ſatan, until they ſhall come to believe in Chriſt, and to *know his love to his church*. 1 Chron. v. 1, 2. Jer. iii. 8. Ezek. xxi. 25—27. Luke i. 31—33. Rev. iii. 9. The Hebrew and Chriſtian churches, are the two candleſticks, into which God poured the oil of his grace, by his precepts to direct their way, and by his promiſes to ſupport their ſouls, in holding up light to the world, who hate it, becauſe it torments their conſciences. The writings of Moſes are the only records that any men have of the firſt creation, of the primitive ſtate of man, of his fall, and of the promiſes of grace to the fathers, from Adam to his time. And the law of Moſes was given, to expoſe the nature and infinite evil of ſin, and to point ſinners to the Son of God, who only can ſave from the guilt and power of it. Therefore the inſpired apoſtle of the Gentiles ſays, The law entered, that the offence might abound; but where ſin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as ſin hath reigned unto death, even ſo might grace reign through righteouſneſs unto eternal life, by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. And to guard againſt the imagination,

gination, that free ſalvation by grace, would encourage men to continue in ſin, he ſaid, To whom ye yield yourſelves ſervants to obey, his ſervants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of ſin unto death, or of obedience unto righteouſneſs. Rom. v. 20, 21. vi. 1, 16. Chriſt was made a *curſe* for us, that we might *receive the promiſe of the Spirit through faith*. And all men are *bewitched*, who claim the *promiſes of grace* in any other way. Gal. iii. 1, 10—14. Yet after the power of the devil was broken in the Roman empire, by the power of the goſpel, men who were the ſervants of ſin, aſſumed the place of the Son of God in his church, ſo as to be lawgivers and judges for all in religious affairs. And as he takes all that is done to his word, and to his ſaints, as done to himſelf, he ſays, He that deſpiſed Moſes' law, died without mercy, under two or three witneſſes: of how much ſorer puniſhment, ſuppoſe ye, ſhall he be thought worthy, who hath *trodden under foot the Son of God!* Heb. x. 28, 29. His perſon never was trodden under foot; but the *Gentiles* tread the *holy city under foot forty and two months*, while the *beaſt* continues, who at laſt kills the two witneſſes. Rev. xi. 2—10. xiii. 5. And as *Lordſhip* is of the *Gentiles*, but is excluded from the church of Chriſt, I take the *holy city* to mean the government of his church, which men have trampled upon. Mark x. 42, 43. Inſtead of obeying the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ſo that his grace might reign through righteouſneſs, ungodly men turned his grace into laſciviouſneſs, in imitation of Cain, Balaam and Core. Jude 4—11. The way of Cain, was to worſhip God without faith in the blood of the Lamb, and to kill Abel becauſe God accepted his believing worſhip, and did not accept Cain's willworſhip. Heb. xi. 4.

1 John iii. 7—12. The error of Balaam was loving the world above God, and counſelling a king to entice Iſrael into ſin, for an earthly reward. The Midianites who did it, were of the ſeed of Abraham, as well as the Iſraelites, but not of that church. A ſword was held up before Balaam to warn him of his danger; and he was finally ſlain with the ſword. Gen. xxv. 2. Num. xxii. 31. xxiii. 9. xxxi. 8, 16. And Chriſt will ſlay all, with the ſword of his mouth, who love the wages of unrighteouſneſs, except they repent. 2 Peter ii. 15, 16. Rev. ii. 14—16. xix. 11—21. Korah raiſed a rebellion in Iſrael againſt the government which God had eſtabliſhed therein, under Moſes and Aaron, who were eminent types of Chriſt. Num. xvi. 1—3. For Moſes truly ſaid unto the fathers, A prophet ſhall the Lord your God raiſe up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me; him ſhall ye hear in all things whatſoever he ſhall ſay unto you. And it ſhall come to paſs, that every ſoul which will not hear that prophet ſhall be deſtroyed from among the people. Acts iii. 22, 23. Moſes verily was faithful in all his houſe as a *ſervant*, for a teſtimony of thoſe things which were to be ſpoken after; but Chriſt as a *Son* over his own houſe; whoſe houſe are we, if we hold faſt the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. And of the prieſthood, it is ſaid, No man taketh this honour unto himſelf, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron: ſo alſo, Chriſt glorified not himſelf, to be made an high prieſt; but he that ſaid unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee. As he ſaith alſo in another place, Thou art a prieſt forever after the order of Melchiſedec. Heb. ii. 5, 6. v. 4—6. When the firſt king of Iſrael preſumed to violate a known command of God, and

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then thought to atone for it by ſacrifices, Samuel ſaid unto him, *Rebellion* is as the ſin of *witchcraft*, and ſtubborneſs is as iniquity and *idolatry*: becauſe thou haſt rejected the *word of the Lord*, he hath alſo rejected thee from being king. 1 Sam. xv. 23. And by ſuch *ſorceries* have all nations been *deceived*. Rev. xviii. 23. When kings ſhall become nurſing fathers, and queens nurſing mothers to the church of Chriſt, they will *bow down* to his authority therein. Iſaiah xlix. 23. And then we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all *godlineſs* and *honeſty*. But we are commanded to withdraw from perverſe diſputers, who ſuppoſe that *gain* is *godlineſs*. 1 Tim. ii. 2. vi. 5. And what clearer evidence can we have of this character, than a refuſal to allow the church of Chriſt to be governed wholly by his laws, and to have each ſoul act in all religious affairs out of a good conſcience towards God? He never united the offices of prieſt and king in any one tribe of Iſrael. But all ſouls who are *born again*, are a choſen generation, a *royal prieſthood*, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that they ſhould ſhew forth the praiſes of him who hath called them out of darkneſs into his marvellous light. And to them it is ſaid, So is the will of God, that with welldoing ye may put to ſilence the *ignorance* of fooliſh men: as *free*, and not uſing your *liberty* for a cloak of *maliciouſneſs*, but as the *ſervants of God*. 1 Peter i. 23. ii. 9—16. All perſons who are waſhed in the blood of Chriſt, are made *kings* and *prieſts* unto God and his Father, and they ſhall reign on the earth. Rev. i. 5, 6. v. 10. And who will dare to oppoſe the reign of Chriſt with his ſaints! Men who love themſelves above God and their neighbours, are ever *learning*, and never *able* to come to the *knowledge of the truth*. Therefore

fore the apoſtle Paul ſaid to Timothy, Continue thou in the things which thou haſt *learned* and haſt been aſſured of, knowing of whom thou haſt *learned* them; and that from a child thou haſt known the *holy ſcriptures*, which are *able* to make thee wiſe unto ſalvation, *through faith which is in Chriſt Jeſus*. All ſcripture is given by inſpiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs; that the man of God may be *perfect*, throughly furniſhed unto all good works. 2 Tim. iii. 1—7, 14—17. And the apoſtle Peter, when ſpeaking of the longſuffering of God with ſinners, and of the new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs, ſays of the writings of his beloved brother Paul, In which are ſome things hard to be underſtood, which they that are *unlearned* and *unſtable wreſt*, as they do alſo the other ſcriptures, unto their own deſtruction. 2 Peter iii. 15, 16.

All men who love ſelf above God and their neighbours, are unlearned and unſtable, and are not able to come to the knowledge of the truth, let them have ever ſo great human accompliſhments. No man *can* come to Chriſt, but he who hath *learned* of the Father. John vi. 44, 45. How earneſt then ſhould each one be, to be *taught of God?* For Jeſus ſays, All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, ſave the Son, and he to whomſoever the Son will reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt. Take my yoke upon you, and *learn* of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye ſhall find reſt unto your ſouls; for my yoke is eaſy, and my burden is light. Matt. xi. 27—30. His yoke is

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the covenant of grace, wherein he ſays, I will put my *laws* into their *mind*, and write them in their *hearts*; and I *will* be their God, and they *ſhall* be my people. Heb. viii. 10. Which is as much above the covenant of circumciſion, as Sarah was above Hagar, or as Jeruſalem which *is above*, and is *free*, is ſuperior to men who are in the *bondage of corruption*. Gal. iv. 25, 26. Rom. viii. 16—21. The pure goſpel commiſſion was given to the *eleven*, who were all regenerate perſons; to whom Jeſus ſaid, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth: Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt; teaching them to obſerve all things, whatſoever I have *commanded* you; and lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world. Amen. Mat. xxviii. 16—20. No man who is not born again, ſo as to love Chriſt, and to obſerve all his commandments, has any more right to this promiſe, than a *thief* has to any promiſe of government, which he had ſtolen out of a public office; or than a *whore* has to ſupport from an honeſt huſband, when ſhe loves and goes after others for a temporal living. In this way the church of Iſrael *played the harlot*. And God ſaid, As troops of *robbers* wait for a man, ſo the company of prieſts *murder* in the way by conſent; for they commit *lewdneſs*. Hoſea ii. 5—8. vi. 9. Leſt thou ſhouldſt ponder the path of life, her ways are *moveable* that thou canſt not know them. Prov. v. 6. Abraham hath been ſet up as the head of the covenant of grace, whoſe ſeed were to deſtroy all the inhabitants of Canaan, when their iniquity ſhould be *full*. But when Iſrael was required to do it, ten ſpies ſaid, We be not *able* to go up againſt the people, for they are ſtronger than we.

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And above ſix hundred thouſand men laid their carcaſes in the wilderneſs, becauſe they would not believe and obey God in that work. And all men who refuſe to believe in and obey the Son of God, will fall after the ſame example of unbelief. Gen. xv. 6, 16. Num. xiii. 31. Heb. iii. 6—11. iv. 11—16. He commands us to mortify our members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanneſs, inordinate affection, evil concupiſcence, and covetouſneſs, which is idolatry: for which thing's ſake the wrath of God cometh on the children of diſobedience. Mark ix. 43—48. Col. iii. 5, 6. But no ſooner was Chriſtianity acknowledged by earthly rulers, than idolatry was eſtabliſhed by law. And all the world wondered after the beaſt, who received his power from the devil; and they ſaid, Who is like unto the beaſt? who is *able* to make war with him? The whore ſits upon a *ſcarlet-coloured* beaſt. Rev. xiii. 1—4. xviii. 3—5. And her ways are ſo *moveable*, that from Abraham ſhe is gone to old Adam, to prove ſalvation by *works*, and not by *grace*. Sin and death came upon all the children of Adam by a *juſt* ſentence of *law*; but righteouſneſs and life came to all believers by a free *gift of grace*. The judgment was by *one* to condemnation; but the free gift is of *many offences* unto juſtification. For if by one man's offence, death reigned by one; much more they which receive *abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteouſneſs*, ſhall reign in life by one, Jeſus Chriſt. For as by *one*, man's diſobedience, many were *made ſinners*; ſo by the obedience of *one*, ſhall many be *made righteous*. Rom. v. 12—19. Little children let no man *deceive* you: *he that doth righteouſneſs, is righteous, even as he is righteous*. 1 John iii. 7. But multitudes are ſo much deceived, as to

deny that we were *made ſinners*, by the offence of Adam, or that we can be *made righteous*, by receiving the *gift* of Chriſt's *perfect righteouſneſs*. And the deception is now carried ſo far, that ſalvation for all men, by their own doings and ſufferings, in time or eternity, is more daringly proclaimed from London and Boſton, than it is from Rome. Yea, their ſcheme includes the ſalvation of devils alſo; and are we not in Babylon! No perſons in the church of Rome would ſwear falſely, or commit murder for her intereſts, without a promiſe from her miniſters of help to get their ſouls out of *purgatory*. Cruel ſuperſtitions were thereby carried to an amazing length. But deceit and cruelty, under religious pretences, hath now brought forth infidelity, and a contempt of revelation, any further than will ſuit the inclinations of men. A profeſſion of faith, without a life of holineſs, is but a *dead body*. The devils believe that there is *one God*, and they *tremble* before the *Son of God*. James ii. 19—26. Mat. viii. 29. Therefore all men who can make uſe of the holy ſcriptures, for worldly purpoſes, without ſerving the Son of God with fear, and rejoicing with trembling, have not ſo much faith as the devils have. Pſalm ii. 6—12. Acts iv. 25, 26. Our Lord was crucified by hypocrites and infidels; and his two witneſſes are killed and rejoiced over in the ſame city, which *ſpiritually* is called Sodom and Egypt. The Sodomites were for defiling all men who came into their city, and Egypt refuſed to let the church go and ſerve God, according to his own inſtitutions. And how full is the world of this impurity and tyranny! Rev. xi. 7—10. Pharaoh never claimed a greater power over Iſrael, than to bind them in all caſes whatſoever. And ſince we have been delivered from the ſecular

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power of foreign nations, we are daily enticed by men who refuſe to allow us free liberty to ſerve God according to his inſtitutions, without injuring any perſon in the world. Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are *defiled* and *unbelieving, is nothing pure.* Titus i. 15. Therefore the command is, Come out from among them, and be ye *ſeparate*, ſaith the Lord, and touch not the *unclean thing.* 2 Cor. vi. 14—18. He alſo ſays, Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate; for many, I ſay unto you, will ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able. When once the maſter of the houſe is riſen up, and hath ſhut to the door, and ye begin to ſtand without, and to knock at the door, ſaying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he ſhall anſwer and ſay unto you, I know you not whence you are: then ſhall ye begin to ſay, We have eaten and drunk in thy preſence, and thou haſt taught in our ſtreets. But he ſhall ſay, I tell you, I know you not whence you are; DEPART from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth, when ye ſhall ſee Abraham, and Iſaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourſelves *thruſt* out. And they ſhall come from the eaſt, and from the weſt, and from the north, and from the ſouth, and ſhall ſit down in the kingdom of God. And behold, there are laſt which ſhall be firſt, and there are firſt which ſhall be laſt. Luke xiii. 24—30.

The holy city lieth fourſquare, and each gate is of one pearl. And Jeſus ſays, *Bleſſed* are they that do his *commandments*, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and ſorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whoſoever loveth and maketh a lie. Rev. xxi.

xxi. 13, 16, 21. xxii. 14, 15. Many good men have ſuppoſed that this new Jeruſalem will be a ſtate of abſolute perfection; but will there be *nations* to be *healed* by the *tree of life*, and *kings of the earth* to bring their glory and honor into the holy city, in a ſtate of abſolute perfection? God ſays, In that day ſhall this ſong be ſung in the land of Judah, We have a *ſtrong city*, *ſalvation* will God appoint for *walls* and for *bulwarks*. Open ye the *gates*, that the *righteous nation which keepeth the truth* may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee, becauſe he truſteth in thee. The Gentiles ſhall come to thy light, and kings to the brightneſs of thy riſing. For braſs I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring ſilver, and for wood braſs, and for ſtones iron: I will alſo make thy officers peace, and thine exacters righteouſneſs. Violence ſhall no more be heard in thy land, waſting nor deſtruction within thy borders; but thou ſhalt call thy *walls ſalvation*, and thy *gates praiſe*. The ſun ſhall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightneſs ſhall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord ſhall be unto thee an everlaſting light, and thy God thy glory. Iſaiah xxvi. 1—3. lx. 3, 17—19. Now compare theſe paſſages with Rev. xxi. 16—27. xxii. 1—5. Our Lord gives the characters of the *bleſſed*, and ſays to them, *Ye are the light of the world. A city that is ſet on an hill, cannot be hid.* Give not that which is *holy* unto *dogs*, neither caſt ye your *pearls* before *ſwine*, leſt they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rent you. The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman, ſeeking goodly pearls; who when he had found *one pearl* of great price, he went and ſold all that he had and bought it. Matt.

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y. 3—14. vii. 6. xiii. 45, 46. And can any man be at a loſs about what he means by the pearl? For he ſays, Whoſoever he be of you, that forſaketh not *all* that he hath, he *cannot* be my diſciple. Luke xiv. 33. I am the *door*; by me if any man enter in he ſhall be *ſaved*, and ſhall go in and out and find paſture. I am the *way*, and the *truth*, and the *life*: no man cometh unto the Father but by me. If ye keep my *commandments*, ye ſhall abide in my *love*; even as I have kept my Father's *commandments*, and abide in his *love*. John x. 9. xiv. 6. xv. 10. None have any right in his church but they who are *converted*, and who act as *little children*. And no complaint is to be received againſt any member, until he hath had two opportunities to ſpeak for himſelf, that in the mouth of two or three witneſſes every word may be eſtabliſhed. And the church is the higheſt judicature upon earth, to determine all religious matters. And ſays Jeſus, Whatſoever ye ſhall bind on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven; and whatſoever ye ſhall looſe on earth ſhall be looſed in heaven. Matt. xviii. 3—18. Therefore when ſome miniſters of the devil had got into the church of Corinth, and intended to deſtroy the character of the apoſtle who gathered it, if poſſible, he refuſed to receive any ſupport from thence, until he could come and have the matter tried by that church, according to the laws of Chriſt. But as a faithful diſcharge of duty is a great privilege, he ſaid, *Forgive me this wrong*. 2 Cor. xi. 12—15. xii. 13. xiii. 1. But I have known men who were for uſing *force* in religious matters, that have brought the firſt of theſe paſſages to prove that it was a mark of the devil's miniſters to preach *freely*. And others turn the ſame argument againſt all miniſters who inculcate

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the laws of Chriſt for the ſupport of his miniſters. And theſe oppoſite parties, in all nations, have bought and ſold the faithful, who have been the ſupport of public credit, by which blood and ſlavery have been carried round the world in galleys and gallant ſhips. But when the laws of Chriſt ſhall be duly executed in his church, they will not be able to ſtrengthen their maſts, nor to ſpread their ſails. Then the cry will be heard, Alas! alas! no man buyeth of our merchandiſe any more! Iſai. xxxiii. 20—23. Rev. xviii. 6—20. Men have bought and ſold the ſaints for *ſlaves*, and alſo the *ſouls* of other men, who have been *deceived* by falſe teachers. 2 Peter ii. 3. The prieſts of invented worſhip were of the *loweſt of the people*. 1 Kings, xii. 31. xiii. 33. 2 Kings, xvii. 32. Chriſt is the great *light of the world*; and of all who turn not to him, it is ſaid, The ancient and honourable, he is the *head*; and the prophet that teacheth *lies*, he is the *tail*. Iſaiah ix. 1—7, 15. Matt. iv. 16. Falſe teachers in the Roman empire were the *tail* of the dragon, who crucified Chriſt, and perſecuted all who kept his *commandments*. And the *beaſt* and the falſe *prophet*, with the devil who *deceived* them, will be caſt into the burning lake together. Rev. xii. 3, 4, 17. xix. 20. xx. 10. And will any men yield to deceit and cruelty any longer! As long as natural birth, or a purchaſe with money, could bring any into the church, all adulterers and idolaters were to die without mercy. Levit. xx. 10. Deut. xiii. 6—11. And covetouſneſs and luxury are adultery and idolatry. Col. iii. 5. Phil. iii. 2, 19. Therefore God ſays, Ye adulterers and adultereſſes, know ye not that the friendſhip of the world is enmity with God? whoſoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God. James iv.

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4. The builders of Babel ſaid, Let us build us city and a tower, whoſe top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a *name*, leſt we be ſcattered abroad upon the face of all the earth. Gen xi. 4. And Babylon has her name from thence; and where is the nation who are not trying to get to heaven by their own works, and to make themſelves a name upon earth? Yet grievous wolves, and perverſe ſchiſmatics, have been held together therein by the ſword, directly againſt the word of God's *grace*, which ſays, *It is more bleſſed to give than to receive*. Acts xx. 28—35. It is bleſſed to receive, when we receive all our comforts from God, as the purchaſe of the blood of his Son. But it is more bleſſed to give; becauſe when we do it as faithful ſtewards, we lay up treaſures in *everlaſting habitations*, which will be enjoyed with infinite pleaſure, when they who had all their *good things* in this life, will not have a drop of water to cool their *tormented tongues*. Luke xvi. 9, 25. They who truſt in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; and are ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate, for the good of others, lay up in ſtore for themſelves a good foundation againſt the time to come, that they may lay hold on *eternal life*. 1 Tim. vi. 17—19. Like the olive, the fig tree, and the vine, they eſteem the doing of good to their neighbours, above any command over their bodies or eſtates; while the unbeliever, like the bramble, ſays, Come and put your truſt in my ſhadow: and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon. Judges ix. 7—15. The tongues of men who would be *many maſters*, ſet on fire the courſe of nature, and it is ſet on fire of *hell*. James iii. 1—6. Therefore our Lord ſays, As ye would that men ſhould do to you

you, do ye alſo to them likewiſe. For every tree is known by his own fruit; for of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble-buſh gather they grapes. A good man out of the good treaſure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treaſure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil; for of the abundance of the heart his mouth ſpeaketh. And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I ſay! Luke vi. 31, 44—46.

How piercing will this queſtion be in the laſt day to the diſobedient! The time is come that judgment muſt begin at the houſe of God; and if it firſt begin at us, what ſhall the end be of them that obey not the goſpel of God? and if the righteous ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the ungodly and the ſinner appear? 1 Peter iv. 17, 18. The church is the only houſe of God upon earth; and it ſhould ever be governed wholly by the revealed *will of God*. And in all expenſes, both to the poor, and to ſupport goſpel miniſters, we ſhould communicate *freely*, out of love to the Son of God, who, though he was rich, yet for our ſakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. And there ought to be an *equality* in the church, as there was in the church of Iſrael, when they knew that their bread came from heaven every day. 2 Cor. viii. 5—15. Exod. xvi. 18. And how happy ſhould we live, if our hearts and our treaſure were in heaven, according to the command of Chriſt? Luke xii. 14, 22—34. Here he ſets a ſacred guard againſt having his church intermeddle with the work of civil rulers. And an inſpired apoſtle ſays, I have written unto you, not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer,

or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with ſuch an one, no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them alſo that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? but them that are without, God judgeth: therefore put away from among yourſelves that wicked perſon. For if we would judge ourſelves, we ſhould not be judged; but when we are judged we are chaſtned of the Lord, that we ſhould not be condemned with the world. 1 Cor. v. 11—13. xi. 31, 32. And ſhall we yet *confound* the church with the world, which is myſtery Babylon? Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity. Truſt not in *oppreſſion*, and become not vain in *robbery*: if riches increaſe, ſet not your heart upon them. God hath ſpoken once; twice have I heard this, that POWER belongeth unto God. Alſo unto thee, O Lord, belongeth MERCY; for thou rendereſt to every man according to his work. Pſalm lxii. 9—12.

And when will men believe and obey him! In the year 1533, the parliament of England revolted from the church of Rome, and ſet up their king as head of the church. But they retained the baptiſms and laying on of hands, which they received in the church of Rome; and alſo the bloody principles of ſupporting their worſhip by force, and of deſtroying all men who oppoſed ſuch an exerciſe of power, as far as they could extend their ſword. And Great Britain hath acted upon theſe principles, until ſhe is ſo much lighter than vanity, as ſcarcely to be able to pay the intereſt of her national debt. And though the power and mercy of God delivered America from her tyranny; yet deceit and cruelty is ſtill exerciſed among us, under religious pretences. The framers of the Maſſa-

chuſetts Conſtitution, in 1780, opened a door for Roman catholicks to become lawgivers and judges for us, about ſoul-guides; to juſtify which, they ſaid to the people, "Your Delegates did not conceive themſelves to be veſted with power to ſet up one denomination of Chriſtians above another; for Religion muſt at all times be a matter between God and individuals." In which they allow men to be Chriſtians, who hold the Pope of Rome to be the head of the univerſal church upon earth. And though every man who takes a ſeat in our Legiſlature, ſolemnly ſwears to renounce all foreign juriſdiction, "civil, *eccleſiaſtical or ſpiritual*;" yet many miniſters are ſupported by force among us, who hold their ſucceſſion of Chriſtianity from the church of Rome; all which is as oppoſite to true Religion, which is ever a matter between God and individuals, as Belial is to Jeſus Chriſt. Yea, how can ſuch worſhip be ſupported by force, without *perjury!* Chriſt ſays, With what judgment ye judge, ye ſhall be judged; and with what meaſure ye mete, it ſhall be meaſured to you again. Mat. vii. 2. Great deceit hath been uſed in New-England, under religious pretences, by different denominations; and how loud are their complaints now, againſt our chief Rulers in America! To love the wages of unrighteouſneſs, is *madneſs*. 2 Peter ii. 15, 16. This love moved the inhabitants of Munſter in Germany, to ſet up a king as head of their church, and to ſupport their worſhip with the ſword, the ſame year in which England was guilty of like madneſs. But becauſe the people of Munſter were ſoon deſtroyed or enſlaved, all men in Europe and America, who have refuſed to put baptiſm before a perſonal profeſſion of faith in Chriſt, have been reproached with the madneſs of Munſter. So the whore

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in Egypt, accuſed Joſeph of the crime he avoided, and becauſe he avoided it: But of deceit and cruelty under the maſk of Religion, good old Jacob ſaid, O my ſoul, come not thou into their ſecret: unto their aſſembly, mine honor, be not thou united. Gen. xxxiv. 25—29. xxxix. 17, 18. xlix. 5—7. And Moſes ſays, Their vine is the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of *gall*, their cluſters are *bitter*. Their wine is the *poiſon of dragons*, and the cruel *venom of aſps*. To me belongeth *vengeance*, and recompence, their foot ſhall ſlide in due time. Deut. xxxii. 32—35. Upon which Paul ſays, Recompenſe to no man evil for evil. Provide things *honeſt* in the ſight of all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourſelves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, *Vengeance* is mine; I will repay, ſaith the Lord. Rom. xii. 17—19. And Peter ſaid to a man who thought to get *power* in the church by *money*, Thou art in the *gall of bitterneſs*, and in the *bond of iniquity*. Acts viii. 19, 23. *Deceit* is the *poiſon of aſps*. Rom. iii. 13.

And it is as real *robbery* to neglect the *ordinance* of God, as it is to force people to ſupport teachers who will not truſt his influence for a temporal living. He *curſeth the bleſſings* of all men who are *partial in the law*. Mal. ii. 2, 9. iii. 7—11. Therefore his faithful watchmen ſay, Pray for us: for we truſt we have a good conſcience, in all things willing to live *honeſtly*. Heb. xiii. 18. Officers are never called *prieſts* in the church of Chriſt, in diſtinction from the reſt of his children. *Apoſtles, and elders, and brethren*, was the ſtyle of his firſt church. Acts xv. 23. And one apoſtle ſaid afterwards, The *elders* which are among you I exhort, who am alſo an *elder*. 1 Peter v. 1. And another

another ſaid, Let the *elders* that rule well, be counted worthy of double honor, eſpecially they who *labour* in the word and doctrine. For—the *labourer* is worthy of his *reward*. 1 Tim. v. 17, 18. Honeſty requires a reward for labour, as much as charity does alms for the poor; and it is Babylonian *confuſion* to hold them to be one and the ſame thing. Our Lord will judge all at laſt, according to their behaviour in this life towards his members and miniſters. Mat. xxv. 31—46. Luke x. 7—16. His miniſters are ſoldiers, as well as labourers. 2. Tim. ii. 3—7. And who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? if we have ſown unto you ſpiritual things, is it a great thing, if we ſhall reap your carnal things? 1 Cor. ix. 7—11. Let each perſon conſider how he can anſwer theſe queſtions to the Son of God, who only can give us ſafety and happineſs, in time or eternity.

FINIS.